

Application

**PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT
WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)
PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY
Request for Applications (RFA)
Number 16333**

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Name of Project: Active Spokane

Amount requested:

January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008: \$50,000

January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009: \$50,000

January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010: \$50,000

CHECKLIST:

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Active Spokane

Introduction

The Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) has been working during the past year to set the stage for the policy work described in this application. We propose to improve the active community environment in Spokane County through promoting the inclusion of the following effective and promising policies within the Regional Pedestrian Plan and two jurisdictional plans, one of which will be the City of Spokane. In addition, we intend to participate in the impact on federal funding for nonmotorized transportation.

Regular physical activity has been shown to reduce the morbidity and mortality from many chronic diseases. The physical environment can help people be active more often.

- 43% of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home meet recommended activity levels, while just 27% of those without safe places to walk are active enough.
- Creating and improving places to be active can result in a 25% increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times a week.
- More children walk to school when there are sidewalks.¹

Below are policies described in the *Nutrition and Physical Activity: A Policy Resource Guide* by the Washington State Department of Health that SRHD will be promoting. Also described is the policy development process stage they are at.

1. Within the transportation section of comprehensive plans, provide for the creation and funding of an integrated network of paved pedestrian and bicycle paths that serve as an alternative to roadways and facilitate non-motorized travel to and through neighborhoods, shopping, parks, and schools. SRHD proposes to develop this policy in the Regional Pedestrian Plan, change it in the City of Spokane, and work to implement it at the local level.
2. Make it a priority of the transportation element of the comprehensive plan to make improvements to the transportation infrastructure (e.g., crosswalks, sidewalks, etc.) around schools and on school routes. We will promote development of and inclusion of this policy within the Regional Pedestrian Plan and two local jurisdictions. With our partners we will actively pursue implementation.
3. Mandate that a greater percentage of federal transportation dollars are spent on pedestrian and bicycle projects, inclusive of, but not limited to, the creation of paths and trails. SRHD and our partners will work to double the amount of federal funding for non-motorized transportation in the 2010 legislation.

Background – Project Readiness

Two community assessment processes pointed the way to the work proposed. First, in early 2007, SRHD conducted an environmental health assessment surveying 200 residents in 13 of Spokane's 27 neighborhoods. Land use and urban design issues were the most frequently cited as major problems and were ranked above concerns about drinking water, outdoor and indoor air, toxins, and neighborhood safety. Among the urban design concerns stated most often were lack

¹ Active Living Resources: Quickfacts, www.activeliving.org/resources/quickfacts

of sidewalks, poor walkability, and not following good planning practices. Second, the Active Living Task Force (ALTF) -- a group representing nonprofit organizations and government agencies, and co-chaired by the City of Spokane Planning Services Department and the Spokane Regional Health District -- implemented the Active Community Environments Assessment in 2004 and 2007. The assessment showed that for bicycle and pedestrian transportation there is no plan, insufficient funding, and poor quality facilities.

Based on these results, the ALTF, with assistance from the Department of Health (DOH), held the *Connecting the City* workshop in June 2007 in Spokane to set priorities for non-motorized transportation. Approximately 60 people from around the county attended the workshop representing neighborhoods, cities, bicycle groups, pedestrian advocates, universities, regional transportation planning, and disabled citizens. The top pedestrian priorities included connecting neighborhoods, completing sidewalks, and requiring new developments to incorporate bike/ped facilities². Through a majority vote, the ALTF prioritized the development of pedestrian plans to be integrated into jurisdiction's comprehensive plans as the method to address these issues. SRHD will actively promote the incorporation of effective and promising policies into these plans.

Project Description

During the next three years, SRHD, ALTF, and other partners plan to create the policy structure needed to increase funding and development of infrastructure that increases walking. To date, policies 1 and 2 above have been identified. Further discussions with planners and partners may lead to identification of other effective or promising policies, such as those addressing land use. Creation and adoption of these plans is necessary prior to accessing local, state, or federal funds for building infrastructure.

The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) invited SRHD to participate in updating the Regional Pedestrian Plan (2008). The regional plan will provide the guidance for development of plans in the smaller jurisdictions in Spokane County. SRHD will promote the inclusion of guidelines of how to create and fund integrated paved pathways into the plan (effective policy) and the importance of prioritizing infrastructure creation and improvements around schools, particularly on the designated Safe Routes to School (promising policy). The City of Spokane has committed to an 18-month process to create a pedestrian plan beginning in 2009. City planners asked SRHD to participate as a key partner. The readiness of other local jurisdictions to develop pedestrian plans will be assessed at the end of Year 1, and one will be selected to receive technical assistance from SRHD. The health district and ALTF will promote the inclusion of these same policies in the transportation section of the comprehensive plans along with assisting in identifying specific pathways, routes and funding sources. In Spokane's comprehensive plan, pathways are identified in the Natural Environment chapter, a non-required section. SRHD and ALTF will advocate for strengthening the policy and moving it to the Transportation chapter where it will have a greater impact on creation of infrastructure.

² City of Spokane, Planning Services: *Connecting Public Health, Active Living & Community Planning*: Active Community Environments Workshops, Spring 2007. Pages 11-16.

<http://www.spokaneplanning.org/Hot%20Topics%20front%20page/Connecting%20the%20City%20Final%20Report.pdf>

In addition, SRHD and the Spokane Regional Transportation Council have agreed to be the agency leads in work to increase federal funding for non-motorized transportation (promising policy). The Rails to Trails Conservancy has invited Spokane to participate in their 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation aimed at doubling the federal funding – from \$4.5 billion to \$9 billion -- for non-motorized transportation in 2010. Part of the proposal will be for \$2 billion of the new funding to be allocated to 40 communities (\$50 million each) for facilities. This will further the work begun with the “Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program” -- four communities received \$25 million for bike/ped facilities improvements to create a shift from driving to walking and biking. Spokane is the control for that program and is working to become one of the 40 communities in 2010.

SRHD’s key strategies to enact policy change will be to conduct or collect, organize, and analyze assessments of sidewalks, safe routes, and paths; provide research and information on effective and promising policies; expand, organize, and educate stakeholders; develop and implement a communication plan; and educate policy makers and community leaders. As part of the state picture, SRHD will continue to educate our partners and leaders on state legislation impacting active living to increase the vital eastside political voice.

Distinction between proposed work and Healthy Communities funds: The existing Spokane Healthy Communities grant focuses on Spokane City Council District 1 (a political subdivision of the City of Spokane). The grant we are applying for through the Preventative Health and Human Services (PHHS) Block Grant has a focus on all of Spokane County and selected cities. The Healthy Communities funding focuses on actual changes to the built environment through increased sidewalks, bikeways and community gardens. This PHHS grant focuses on policy development to increase physical activity.

1. Strategies based on State Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan

Physical Activity Objective 1:

Increase the Number of Physical Activity Opportunities Available to Children

- C. Encourage policies that provide kindergarten through grade 12 students with opportunities for physical activity outside of formal physical education classes

Physical Activity Objective 3:

Increase the number of Active Community Environments in Washington State

- A. Utilize urban planning approaches - zoning and land use - that promote physical activity.
- B. Incorporate transportation policy and infrastructure changes to promote non-motorized transportation.
- C. Enhance the safety and perceived safety of communities to improve walk-ability and bike-ability.

2. Sources of effective or promising policies

The effective and promising policies chosen were identified from the *Nutrition and Physical Activity: A Policy Resource Guide* by the Washington State Department of Health, February 2005, pages 46, 48, and 54.

3. Key Partners and Roles

The following are key partners in Active Spokane: **Spokane Regional Transportation Council**- lead on development of regional pedestrian plan and co-lead with SRHD on 2010 initiative; **Active Living Task Force** – key stakeholder and advocates for plans development and 2010 initiative; **City of Spokane** - lead on development of pedestrian plan for city; **WSU Design Institute** – provide pedestrian mapping assistance and data; **Inland Northwest Trails Coalition** – citizen advocacy arm of 2010 initiative and supporter of neighborhood connections; **Safe Kids** – assist in development of Safe Routes to School and advocates for neighborhood connections; **Centennial Trail** – supporter of expanding trail system. Other partners and supporters are on board and will participate in the process. Additional stakeholders will be recruited.

4. Exit Strategy and Lasting Change

Our sustainability and exit strategy will be started at the beginning of this process and developed with time. In partnership with the ALTF, SRHD will use the methods outlined in the Center for Civic Partnerships Sustainability Workshop in which the coordinator and several partners participated in Spokane. We anticipate the two key components to lasting change will be securing funding for building infrastructure, whether increased federal funding or the smaller local or state funding, and education of community members to continue effectively interacting with planners and elected officials.

5. Evaluation

SRHD agrees to participate in an evaluation process with DOH on the effective policy sited. For the promising policies – priority to make improvements around schools and increased federal funding – we will conduct process evaluation assess how the policies are implemented. To evaluate behavior change because of the policy, we will use surveys. As the control city for the “Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program”, the initial survey was done in 2006 and will be repeated in 2010 and could be conducted a third time in 2014 to determine impact of substantial federal funding for infrastructure³. While this would only show non-motorized transportation, SRHD’s biennial survey on physical activity and nutrition will be used to assess the increase in general physical activity.

6. Objectives, interventions and activities, and indicators

Measurable Objective Year 1:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of identified physical activity promoting policies within Regional Pedestrian Plan and adoption of plan. Expand broad base of support for pedestrian projects and 2010 initiative. 	
Interventions and Activities Year 1:	Indicators that demonstrate success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate policy makers, leaders, planners, and the community in the county/cities regarding the health, economic, climatic, and social benefits of pedestrian modes of travel including workshop on pedestrian friendly communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of presentation and # of attendees. # of workshop attendees Increased number of stakeholders, # of active participants

³ Spokane Regional Transportation Council <http://www.srtc.org/Publications/bike-ped/draft%20non%20motorized%20study.pdf>.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and educate additional stakeholders for regional plan and 2010 initiative Research examples of designated effective policies and educate decision-makers Design and implement involvement process for local jurisdiction planners Design and implement public involvement process for pedestrian plans Conduct biennial survey on physical activity that will provide information on pedestrian issues Contribute to design of work plan for city of Spokane pedestrian plan Educate 2010 coalition on federal bill development and politics of transportation bills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy options on recommended physical activity promoting policies developed and one implemented # of meetings and # of jurisdictions represented # of meetings and # of community represented Document of survey results Work plan for city developed Timeline for approach to federal funding developed and implemented
Measurable Objective Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of identified effective policies within City of Spokane pedestrian plan. Identification of routes, pathways, and funding for expanded network in Spokane Area political leaders, businesses, and community actively support 2010 initiative 	
Interventions and Activities Year 2:	Indicators that demonstrate success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to educate policy makers and community leaders in the county/city on the importance of pedestrian travel, including workshop Educate jurisdictions on regional plan Design and implement public involvement process for local pedestrian plans Assess readiness of jurisdictions for creating ped. plan and choose 1 to receive technical assistance Assess, designate, design, and recommend an integrated network of paved pedestrian routes in jurisdictions engaging in pedestrian plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of presentations and # of attendees. Buy in of leaders and community # of meetings/workshops. # of attendees. Area jurisdictions understand Regional Plan # of meetings and # of participants. # of interested cities and quality of technical assistance. Pedestrian network represents input from stakeholders and shows connection to goods and services.
Measurable Objective Year 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Spokane's pedestrian plan is completed and adopted Federal funding is doubled for non-motorized transportation 	
Interventions and Activities Year 2:	Indicators that demonstrate success:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to educate policy makers and leaders, including workshop Assist in completion of Spokane and local jurisdiction pedestrian plans Educate Plan Commission on the Pedestrian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of presentations and # of attendees Plan Commission understands proposed Pedestrian Plan Plan is adopted and includes

<p>Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the City of Spokane and other partners to implement guidelines of the Regional Pedestrian Plan in their local Comprehensive Plans • Educate Congressional staffers and leaders on importance of non-motorized transportation 	<p>physical activity policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Plan guidelines are represented in city pedestrian plans • Washington Congressional delegation supports increased non-motorized transportation funding
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